UNITED
NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/22253
22 February 1991

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

NOTE BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

The attached letter, dated 22 February 1991, was addressed to the President of the Security Council by the Permanent Observer of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations. In accordance with the request contained in the letter, the text is being circulated as a document of the Security Council.

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Annex

Letter dated 22 February 1991 from the Permanent Observer of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to forward to you the aide-mémoire of 20 February 1991 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on United Nations membership.

I request that this letter, together with the enclosed aide-mémoire of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) PAK Gil Yon
Ambassador
Permanent Observer

Enclosure

Aide-mémoire dated 20 February 1991 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on United Nations membership

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea deems it necessary to clarify its official position in connection with "unilateral United Nations membership" pursued by the south Korean authorities and makes public this aide-mémoire.

A

Our country's membership in the United Nations should be settled on the basis of agreement between the north and the south favourable to national reunification.

The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has maintained through the years, since its foundation, that United Nations membership is directly and inseparably related to national reunification.

The failure to achieve the correct solution to United Nations membership will inevitably raise further obstacles to the reunification of the country.

Accordingly, we maintain our consistent position to initiate reunification-oriented proposals in connection with United Nations membership and make every effort for their realization.

The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea considers it best to enter the United Nations under a single State-name after reunification through confederation. But if it is on condition that the north and the south enter the United Nations with a single seat, it will have no objection to holding United Nations membership even before reunification.

Such position represents the firm will of the Korean nation to achieve the reunification at the earliest date as well as gives due consideration to the stand of the south Korean authorities calling for a hasty solution to United Nations membership.

If United Nations membership with a single seat is admitted, it will help to open up a new phase for peace and peaceful reunification on the Korean peninsula.

United Nations membership with a single seat for the north and the south appears realistic at present.

The north and the south have reached complete agreement on the participation of unified teams of the north and the south in the forty-first world table-tennis championships and the sixth world youth soccer championships at the recently held fourth inter-Korean sports talks.

This precedent eloquently shows that, if the north and the south pull together in conformity with the interests of the whole nation, United Nations membership could also be solved in a way conducive to the reunification.

If a fair solution to United Nations membership favourable to reunification is to be achieved, it should be based on agreement between the north and the south.

If United Nations membership is handled in favour of the stand of one side with no agreement between the north and the south, it will create other obstacles to national reunification and cause serious consequences by further aggravating the confrontation between the north and the south.

The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea suggested, out of such a viewpoint, that the measures towards United Nations membership should appear as the top current agenda item for discussion in the north-south high-level talks led by prime ministers that have been held for the first time in the history of the country's division.

The south Korean authorities also admitted that United Nations membership is an internal question to be discussed and settled between the north and the south and agreed to negotiate it as a priority issue at the north-south high-level talks.

Accordingly, admission to the United Nations with a single seat has been discussed at the three rounds of the north-south high-level talks and several delegate-level talks.

We have suggested, at the talks, detailed proposals of cooperation, which substantially guarantee confidence and unity between the north and the south in the United Nations forum.

Through this process, we came to witness the commonness of the north and the south in achieving national unity and maintaining reunification-oriented relations of cooperation in the forum of the United Nations and, at the same time, became confident that, if both sides show flexibility in the coming talks, an agreement on United Nations membership is sure to be reached.

The Government of our Republic considers that the joint admission to the United Nations with a single seat is the most reasonable approach to the settlement of United Nations membership; however it keeps its big-minded position unchanged to negotiate on any solutions to United Nations membership if they are conducive to national reunification.

B

If south Korea's "unilateral United Nations membership" is admitted, it will strain north-south relations to the extreme and eventually create further tension on the Korean peninsula.

The issue of United Nations membership should continue to be discussed at the forthcoming north-south high-level talks, to be agreed upon.

Notwithstanding this, the south Korean authorities, strange to say, attempt to force their "unilateral admission to the United Nations" claiming that United Nations membership is not a question to be dealt with between the north and the south.

If the south Korean authorities give up the negotiation on United Nations membership, the agenda item at the ongoing north-south high-level talks, but dare to enter the United Nations unilaterally, it will be an open challenge and treacherous act against the dialogue partner and a sort of declaration of breaking off the dialogue.

Since the south Korean authorities, through "unilateral admission to the United Nations", seek to perpetuate "two Koreas" and eventually create an international environment to realize their dream of "reunification by absorption", we cannot but take it seriously as a challenge to the desire for national reunification and an intolerable insult to our sovereignty.

No one can predict what sort of events may happen on the Korean peninsula if the "unilateral United Nations membership" of south Korea is forcibly admitted when the political and military confrontation between the north and the south grows more acute than ever before owing to the "Team Spirit '91" joint military exercises being staged by the United States and the south Korean authorities.

The south Korean authorities should put an end to their reckless attempt for "unilateral United Nations membership" if they are really interested in the dialogue, reconciliation and national reunification.

If the south Korean authorities dare to enter the United Nations unilaterally, however, they will have to take full responsibility for all consequences therefrom and inevitably get stern judgement as separatists from our people and history.

We are convinced that a new prospect will surely be brought up in the solution of United Nations membership when a reunification-oriented climate is ensured together with progress in the inter-Korean dialogue and adoption of a non-aggression declaration.

The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea expresses its belief that all States Members of the United Nations desirous of peace and peaceful reunification on the Korean peninsula will show their understanding and support of our position to solve United Nations membership through the north-south dialogue conducive to the peace and peaceful reunification.